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منظمة العفو الدولية
國際特赦組織

# URGENT ACTION

TL3817

**EXTERNAL** **AI Index: ASA 21/17/97**

**EXTRA 41/97** **Fear of torture / ill-treatment / possible prisoners of conscience** **24 March 1997**

**EAST TIMOR** **At least 48 youths**

Amnesty International is concerned for the safety of at least 48 East Timorese currently in detention following a demonstration in Dili on 23 March.

The demonstration began at around 5am at the Mahkota Hotel in Dili, the capital of East Timor, where the United Nations Personal Representative of the Secretary General on East Timor, Mr Jamsheed Marker, is staying during a three-day visit to East Timor. Around 200 demonstrators allegedly gathered in the hotel with the intention of waiting for the Personal Representative to emerge from his room so that they could present him with documents. The demonstrators are believed to have been carrying banners and shouting slogans in support of East Timorese independence. At around 6am police and troops arrived at the hotel and attempted to disperse the demonstration. Clashes then broke out between the security forces and the demonstrators. The police have admitted firing warning shots and there are also reports that rubber bullets were fired.

There are allegations that the security forces blocked off the exits from the hotels, preventing the demonstrators from leaving. Some demonstrators received cuts as they attempted to escape through broken windows.

Forty-eight demonstrators in all were arrested at the hotel. Eleven youths were taken to a military hospital and it is believed that some of them have wounds resulting from beatings by the security forces. Marcelino and Lourenco Smith are among others who were wounded, but neither is believed to be in detention. There are unconfirmed reports that at least one person was killed during the confrontation.

The names of all the detainees are not yet known, but it is believed that there are at least two women among them. Those known to have been arrested include Rosita (f), Marcelina (f), Imaculada (f), Luis de Fatima, Nelson Pereira, Romaldo Brasil and Agustino dos Santos. On 24 March, police released three of the 48, but 45 remain in custody. Police have indicated that arrests of other individuals believed to have been involved in the demonstration may follow.

Another demonstration was believed to have been held in Dili today, 24 March. There are reports that at least three more youths and possibly as many as seven were detained today by police in Dili, but the circumstances of their arrest are not clear. Only three names are known: Cesaltino Ximenes, Herminigildo Da Costa and Tomas Coreia. Their whereabouts are not known.

East Timorese in the custody of police and the military are at risk of torture or ill-treatment particularly if they are denied access to independent legal representation. It is not known if this is the case for those detained in connection with these demonstrations.

The Personal Representative is still in Indonesia, but is believed to have left East Timor. Amnesty International is urging the Personal Representative to use his influence to ensure that those in custody are not ill-treated, are granted access to lawyers and that none is being held for the peaceful expression of his or her beliefs.

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**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Arbitrary arrests of individuals opposed to Indonesian occupation of East Timor, including those engaging in peaceful expressions of opposition, are common in East Timor. Demonstrations against the integration of East Timor with Indonesia are perceived by the authorities to be a major source of embarrassment to the Indonesian Government and East Timorese have been sentenced to prison terms for engaging in such peaceful demonstrations. Individuals who engage in demonstrations in front of foreign delegations, including UN political or human rights representatives, have also been arrested in the past.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express/airmail letters in English or Bahasa Indonesia or your own language:**
- calling on the authorities to clarify the whereabouts of all those detained in connection with demonstrations on 23 and 24 March 1997, and to asking for details of any charges they are facing;
- calling on the authorities to ensure that none of those in custody is at risk of torture or ill-treatment;
- urging that all those detained in connection with the demonstrations have immediate access to independent legal assistance;
- calling on the authorities to immediately and unconditionally release any detainees who are being held solely for the peaceful expression of their beliefs.

**APPEALS TO:**

Minister of Foreign Affairs
Ali Alatas SH
Menteri Luar Negeri
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Jakarta
Indonesia
**Fax: +62 21360 517/380 5511/ 345 7782/360 541/724 5354**
**Telex: 44205; 44469 deplu jkt**
**Telegrams: Minister of Foreign Affairs, Jakarta, Indonesia**
**Salutation: Dear Minister**

**COPIES TO:**

**National Commission on Human Rights - East Timor**
Alex Refialy, SH
KOMNAS HAM
Jalan Dr Antonio de Carvalho
Dili Timor Timur
Indonesia

and to diplomatic representatives of Indonesia accredited to your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 21 April 1997.